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# EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE JOB TRAINING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

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The advent of reliable and scientifically valid data on employee and customer satisfaction has allowed the Surveys and Research Staff (245) to explore possible relationships between VA employee satisfaction and veteran customer satisfaction.

Using data from the 1997 *"One VA" Employee Survey* and the 1996 *Survey of Veterans' Satisfaction With the Compensation and Pension Process*, we will show a clear relationship between employee satisfaction with job training\* and the percent of veterans who are satisfied with VA's performance in the C&P claims process.

**In short, regional offices with higher levels of employee satisfaction with job training tend to have a higher percentage of veterans who felt the time taken to adjudicate their C&P claims was reasonable. Regional offices with higher levels of employee satisfaction with job training also tend to have a higher percentage of veterans who felt they were treated with courtesy and respect. Lastly, veteran satisfaction with timeliness and courtesy and respect lead unmistakably to higher percentages of veterans who are satisfied with the handling of their C&P claim.**

Linear regression analysis shows that employee satisfaction with job training "explains" about 14.0 percent of the variation in reasonableness of time (veteran point of view) and about 19.0 percent of the variation in whether or not a veteran felt treated with courtesy and respect. Clearly, factors other than employee job training play a role in timeliness and courtesy from a veteran's perspective, but employee job training, on its own, does account for a large amount of variation in these two customer satisfaction variables.

Using a mathematical regression equation, we can show how different levels of employee satisfaction with job training affect satisfaction from the customer's perspective:

Let:

**Y** = percent of veterans who felt the amount of time to their claim decision was reasonable, and

**X** = mean (average) of employee job training satisfaction.

$$Y = 25.040 + 11.623(X)$$

If the job training satisfaction mean was 3.0, we can predict that about 59.9 percent of veterans would be satisfied with the time it took to reach a decision on their C&P claim.

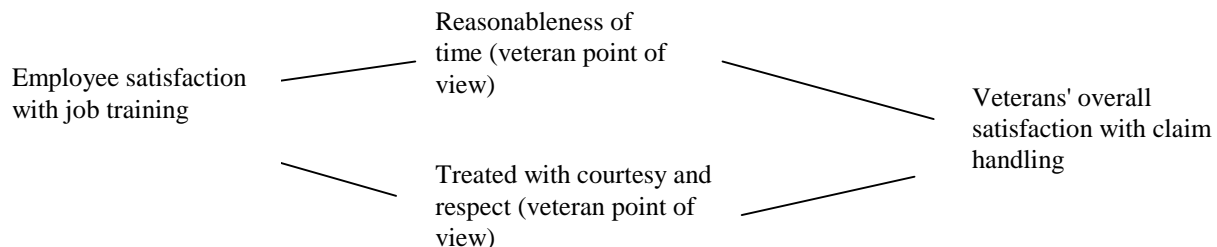
If the job training mean was 3.5, we can predict that about 65.7 percent of veterans would be satisfied with the time it took to reach a decision on their C&P claim.

Clearly, the higher the mean of employee job training satisfaction, the higher the percentage of veterans who felt their claim was adjudicated in a timely manner.

The same relationship exists between employee job training satisfaction and the percentage of veterans who felt they were treated with courtesy and respect:

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The relationship between employee satisfaction with job training and veteran satisfaction with the compensation process can be displayed by the following schematic:



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Let:

**Y** = percent of veterans who felt they were treated with courtesy and respect, and

**X** = the mean of employee job training satisfaction.

$$Y = 46.49 + 8.859(X)$$

If the job training satisfaction mean was 3.0, we can predict that about 73.1 percent of veterans would feel that they were treated with courtesy and respect during the C&P claims process.

If the job training mean were 3.5, we can predict that about 77.5 percent of veterans would feel that they were treated with courtesy and respect during the C&P claims process.

The higher the mean of employee job training satisfaction, the higher the percentage of veterans who felt their claim was adjudicated in a timely manner.

The regression equation predicting the percent of veterans who will be satisfied with the overall handling of their C&P claim can be satisfactorily predicted by two customer satisfaction variables: timeliness and courtesy. The percent of "explained" variation in overall satisfaction with claim handling is 91.4. This means that little else beyond these two variables is needed to correctly predict the percent of veterans who will be satisfied with the overall handling of their claim.

The mathematical equation predicting overall satisfaction with claim handling can be written as follows:

Let:

**Y** = percent of veterans who are satisfied with the overall handling of their C&P claim,

**X1** = percent of veterans who felt the amount of time to their claim decision was reasonable, and

**X2** = percent of veterans who felt they were treated with courtesy and respect during the C&P claims process.

$$Y = -18.552 + .367(X1) + .781(X2)$$

If 75.0 percent of veterans believe the time to get a decision was reasonable and 75.0 percent of veterans feel they were treated with courtesy and respect, then we would expect 67.6 percent of veterans to say they were satisfied with the overall handling of the C&P claim.

Conversely, if only half (50.0 percent) of veterans feel the time to a decision was reasonable and only half (50.0 percent) of all veterans feel they were treated with courtesy and respect, only about 38.8 percent would feel satisfied with the overall handling of their claim.

This paper shows a relationship between employee satisfaction with job training and two key factors that play a large role in whether or not a veteran will be satisfied with the overall handling of her or his C&P claim.

Multi-dimensional relationships such as these should continue to be explored in order to effectively manage VBA for clear results.

*\*NOTE: Employee satisfaction with job training is calculated as the mean of the following six questions from the 1997 "One VA" Employee Survey:*

1. *Employees receive the training they need to perform their jobs.*
2. *Employees receive the everyday guidance and assistance they need to perform their jobs*
3. *Employees are provided with training that enhances their career advancement opportunities.*
4. *Education and training programs are developed based on an assessment of employees' training needs.*
5. *Supervisors/team leaders support employee efforts to learn outside the job.*
6. *Employees receive training and guidance in providing high quality customer service.*